



GRAIN TRANSPORTATION REPORT

Shipper and Exporter Assistance Program
Transportation and Marketing Division
Agricultural Marketing Service
United States Department of Agriculture

November 3, 1997

Corn And Soybean Crop Progress Report. The October 27, *USDA Crop Progress Report* shows this year's corn harvest 66 percent complete, which is well ahead of last year's harvest and also the 5-year average of 49 percent.

The 17 states which were surveyed, accounted for 90 percent of the 1996 corn crop. The three largest corn producing states, Iowa, Illinois, and Nebraska reported, 76 percent, 79 percent and 63 percent, respectively, of the harvest completed. The 1997 corn estimates released by USDA in *World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates* October 10, shown on page 2, list corn production at 236.53 million metric tons (MMT). The corn crop estimate will make this year the third largest crop in 10 years. For the 1997 soybean crop, the report indicated that 85 percent of the crop harvested, as opposed to 76 percent last year. The report surveyed 19 States to assess production for the 1997 soybean crop. These States accounted for 94 percent soybean production in 1996.

Railcar Deliveries To Port. Railcar deliveries of grain unloaded at port elevators for the week ended October 22, 1997, totaled 6,568 cars, 541 fewer cars than were unloaded for the similar week in 1996. In comparison, port unloads have reached levels of 12,000 cars or more during peak export periods. The largest increase in railcar deliveries for the week ended October 22, was at Pacific Coast ports, where an increase of 442 cars occurred when compared to the corresponding period in 1996. During the past 4 weeks, rail deliveries have averaged 3,550 cars to Pacific Coast ports, while deliveries to South Atlantic and Gulf ports, have averaged 2,721 cars, compared to 2,637 cars and 1,732 cars, respectively, for the corresponding period in 1996.

Stocks Of Grain At Selected Elevators. The most recent edition of *Stocks of Grain at Selected Elevator Sites* shows surveyed sites filled to 48 percent capacity, which is 3 percent higher than the previous week and 3 percent higher through the corresponding period in 1996. Those same surveyed sites were filled to 43 percent and 40 percent for 1995 and 1994, respectively, for the comparable period. Surveyed river points are currently operating at 42 percent as opposed to 27 percent of capacity on October 22, 1996.

River Situation. At the Melvin Price Locks and Dam during the previous 24 hours ending midnight Sunday (Nov. 2), 9 tows with 76 barges passed upbound, and 13 tows with 155 barges passed in the downbound direction. Also, on Nov. 2, a 7 hour transit delay had tows backed up at Lock & Dam 25. On Monday (Nov. 3), at 6:00 a.m., there were no tows waiting to go upbound, and one waiting to go downbound. In the Columbia River Basin on Friday (Oct. 31), 5 vessels were at berth loading, while 2 waited.

This report is prepared by Bill Dunton, Traffic Management Specialist. Other contributors to this report include Karl Hacker, Nick Marathon, and Paul Bertels, Agricultural Economists, AMS, Transportation and Marketing Division - (202) 690-1303. You can retrieve this document from our Automatic Fax System by using the handset on your fax machine and dialing (202) 690-1707. Reach us on the Internet at www.usda.gov/ams/tmd/grain.htm.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USDA Office of Communications at (202) 720-2791. To file a complaint, write the Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC, 20250, or call (800) 245-6340 (voice) or (202) 720-1127 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity employer.

SOUTHBOUND BARGE FREIGHT RATES*

Week Ended October 24

River/Region	Contract Period	Rate**
No trades reported		

* Based on Actual Trades from the Merchants Exchange of St. Louis Barge Call Session

** Rates are Quoted as a Percentage of the 1976 Tariff Benchmark

PROJECTED 1997/98 MARKETING YEAR CORN SUPPLY AND USE*million metric tons*

	U.S.	Major Exporters	World
Beginning Stocks	22.46	1.50	84.18
Production	236.53	24.70	570.40
Domestic Use	187.97	17.15	590.88
Exports	51.44	8.78	73.06
Ending Stocks	19.83	1.37	63.70

Major exporters include Argentina, South Africa and Thailand.

Source: World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates, USDA, October 10, 1997.

WEEK
ENDED

1997

COMPARABLE WEEK
1996

INSPECTIONS FOR EXPORT

1,000 Bushels

Sept 25	76,372 *	76,661
Oct 2	89,867 *	72,229
Oct 9	89,746 *	53,389
Oct 16	96,044 *	77,490
Oct 23	86,344	95,461
Calendar Year to Date	2,947,245 *	3,393,913

* Revised

RAIL CARLOADINGS

Carloads

Sept 27	22,168 *	16,924 *
Oct 4	24,636 *	17,873 *
Oct 11	25,968 *	24,526 *
Oct 18	25,099 *	28,446 *
Oct 25	26,631 *	29,567 *
Calendar Year to Date	995,691 *	1,004,436 *

* Revised - Soo Line Not Included

RAIL DELIVERIES TO PORT

Carloads

	North Atlantic	So. Atlantic & Gulf	Pacific Coast	North Atlantic	So. Atlantic & Gulf	Pacific Coast
Sept 24	23	2,505	3,274	4	1,561	1,712
Oct 1	29	3,089	3,249	0	1,324	1,373
Oct 8	171	2,301	3,866 *	0	822	1,979
Oct 15	136	2,802	3,359	0	1,839 *	3,031
Oct 22	152	2,692	3,724	0	2,943	4,166
CY to Date	1,732	96,433 *	152,825 *	2,613	119,983 *	158,831

* Revised

BARGE GRAIN MOVEMENTS

1,000 Tons

River / Lock Number	Week ending 10/25/97					Week ending 10/26/96				
	CORN	WHT.	SOY	OTHER	TOTAL	CORN	WHT.	SOY	OTHER	TOTAL
Miss./15	196	12	243	2	453	340	0	72	0	411
Miss./25	364	11	447	2	823	348	18	348	8	722
Miss./26	678	15	581	4	1,277	706	21	439	11	1,176
Miss./27	700	17	597	4	1,317	712	21	480	11	1,223
Ill. /8	202	6	93	2	303	274	29	234	12	549
Ohio /52	33	0	60	48	140	43	0	15	61	119
Ark./1	0	9	7	0	16	0	25	17	0	42

Calendar year totals for Miss./27, Ohio/52 and Ark./1:

Year	Corn	Wheat	Soybeans	Other Grains	Total
1997	23,017	2,330	7,111	2,674	35,131
1996	26,076	2,090	6,374	3,243	37,783

Other grains include barley, sorghum and oats. Totals may not add due to rounding. Data source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

MAJOR EXPORT SALES *

1,000 Metric Tons

WEEK ENDED	1997			COMPARABLE WEEK 1996		
	WHEAT	CORN	SOYBEANS	WHEAT	CORN	SOYBEANS
Sept 26	4,920	7,693	9,804	4,297	14,714	5,382
Oct 3	4,678	7,487	10,370	3,898	14,778	5,725
Oct 10	4,587	7,279	10,722	4,073	15,080	6,704
Oct 17	4,239	7,126	9,869	3,762	14,605	7,502
Oct 24	4,414	7,121	8,897	3,654	14,537	7,613

*Unshipped Balances-Current & Next Marketing Year

GULF COAST OCEAN GRAIN VESSELS

IN PORT			LOADED 7 DAYS	DUE NEXT 10 DAYS	IN PORT			LOADED 7 DAYS	DUE NEXT 10 DAYS
Oct	2	36	52	52	35	39	52		
Oct	9	31	54	62	31	43	71		
Oct	16	37	46	64	34	42	68		
Oct	23	30	61	60	43	43	58		
Oct	30	34	50	67	50	52	82		

AVERAGE GRAIN PRICES

Dollars Per Bushel

WHEAT			CORN ¹	SOYBEANS ²	WHEAT			CORN ¹	SOYBEANS ²
Sept	26	3.81	2.65	6.30	4.76	3.29	7.93		
Oct	3	3.71	2.59	6.25	4.73	3.05	7.44		
Oct	10	3.83	2.82	6.66	4.75	3.09	7.32		
Oct	17	3.91	2.81	6.98	4.79	2.91	6.88		
Oct	24	3.99	2.80	6.85	4.77	2.85	6.95		

(Wheat-#1 HRW-ORD., Kansas City; Corn-#2 Yellow, Chicago; Soybeans-#1 Yellow, Chicago)

¹ Bought to arrive 15 days; ² Bought to arrive 30 days.

OCEAN FREIGHT RATES*

Dollars/Tons - Basis Vessel Size/Ton

U.S. Loading Port	Destination	Estimated Freight Rates	Dates of Movement
St. Lawrence	Belgium	\$08.50 - (60M)	November
Pacific Northwest	Taiwan	\$13.25 - (56M)	November
Gulf	Spain	\$12.50 - (32M)	November
Gulf	Japan	\$22.25 - (54M)	November
Gulf	China	\$24.00 - (50M)	November
Gulf	Malaysia	\$25.00 - (25M)	November
Gulf	Hamburg	\$11.00 - (55M)	November

*These ocean fixtures are based on full ship charters.